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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/626,131	07/23/2003	Kun-Chung Liu	08688.0324US01	9367
23552	7590	06/30/2004	EXAMINER	
MERCHANT & GOULD PC P.O. BOX 2903 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402-0903			SAKRAN, VICTOR N	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER

3677

DATE MAILED: 06/30/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/626,131

Applicant(s)

LIU, KUN-CHUNG

Examiner

VICTOR N SAKRAN

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 July 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,5,6,9 and 10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2-4,7 and 8 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 23 July 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 9, and 10, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art Figure 1 in view of Liu U. S. 6,571,438.

Figure 1 (prior art) discloses the general combination claimed of a shoelace fastener for a shoe comprising a substantially rigid fastener body formed with

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spaced apart shoelace exit holes (302) and another spaced apart shoelace entry holes (301) including a pair of anchor portions (303), each of which is disposed between the respective adjacent pair of said shoelace entry and exit holes, except for the particular use of a pull unit which is secured to the fastener body defining two loop portions and when desired to loosening the shoe a manual pulling force applied on the fastener body by said pull unit. Liu teaches the use of a pull unit which is secured to a fastener body in a shoelace fastener device assembly defining two loop portions that cooperate with the distal lace segments, and whereby a manual pulling force applied on its fastener body by its pulling unit for loosening the shoe; see Figures 3-9; the abstract; column 3, lines 20-28, and claim 2. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the shoelace fastener of Figure 1, (prior art) with a pull unit and to form two loop portions with the end portions of its shoelace, such that when desired to loosening the shoe a manual force will be applied to its fastener body by the pulling unit in the manner taught, disclosed and suggested by Liu, especially, since such modification involves only routine skill in the art.

Furthermore, Applicant is reminded that in considering the disclosure of a reference, it is proper to take into account not only specific teaching of the reference but also the inferences which one skilled in the art would reasonably be expected to draw therefrom; see *In re Preda*, 401 F.2d 825, 826, 159 USPQ 342, 344 (CCPA 1968).

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Moreover, the particular location and/or the arrangement selected of an elements is considered to be no more than an obvious matter of design choice to one having ordinary skill within the art, especially, since it has been held that rearranging pa an invention is involves only routine skill in the art. See In Re Japikse, 86 USPQ 70

AS to the particular type of material used is considered to be no more than an obvious matter of design choice within the skill in the art, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. See In Re Leshin, 125 USPQ 416.

Claims 2-4, 7, and 8, are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Applicant's attention is directed to the prior art cited herein, as showing structure related to Applicant's disclosed invention.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to VICTOR N SAKRAN whose telephone


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number is 703-308-2224. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30 AM - 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, J. J. swann can be reached on 703-308-4115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

June 23, 2004


VICTOR N SAKRAN
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3677